

With the suicide, by harakiri, of General Ushijima and his Chief of Staff, General Cho, whose stars "have fallen with the setting of the waning moon over Mabuni,"³² the island was conquered, and though it was not known at that time, this was the "last battle" of World War II.³³

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Unlike the Japanese, the Okinawans seemed unwilling to die when the alternative was death or surrender. They apparently did not take the emperor cult and State Shinto seriously, and though they were conscripted in the Japanese army, they did not identify themselves strongly with the war or its successful conclusion.³⁴

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The Okinawan people showed remarkable ability to stand up under physical and mental strain. Many lived in caves for long periods, subsisting on whatever food could be obtained. Aside from filth diseases and lice infestations, the death of many of the very young, and some of the very old, they suffered little deterioration and recuperated under care of military government teams with the help of American foods and clothing. Professional observers were struck by their lack of mental collapse and breakdown, and one observer has suggested that prolonged breast feeding and free access to the mother's breast in infancy had given the people the emotional security to withstand the trials of the war.³⁵

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Okinawa After the War

The war brought catastrophic upheavals to the civilian population, especially in those areas of greatest military activity. One consequence

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[Text continues Top of P. 44--Analysis]

- 32 Quoted from Okinawa, the last battle, from the account of a prisoner of war, 470.
- 33 The campaign was declared ended on July 2, 1945. Sources for the statements in this and the preceding paragraphs will be found on pp. 407, 422, 425 (Quotation), 426-27 (Quotation), 437-42, 441 (Quotation), 470 of Okinawa, the last battle.
- 34 These statements are based on personal conversations with Okinawans who lived through the war, either as soldiers or civilians.
- 35 Materials in the first part of the paragraph are based on personal conversations. The interesting thesis about breast feeding, which I believe has serious defects, will be commented upon in the section on family life. See James C. Moloney, Psychiatric observations in Okinawa Shima. The psychology of the Okinawan. Psychiatry 8 (1945), 391-99; and, with Charles R. Biddle, A psychiatric hospital in military government, *ibid*, 400-01. Of great interest are the first hand observations of the authors made at Ginos hospital. For other comments on the behavior of Okinawans during the war, see Okinawa, the last battle, 48, 415-17, 463, 468.

is bending and stooping, or while his older brother or sister is running or jumping. The ease with which adults sleep is equally remarkable. On buses in Okinawa, I have seen men and women with their heads against window sashes, while the bus bounces over the rough roads. Sharp cracks on the head are unavoidable, and to one unaccustomed to it, would be very painful. But people sleep like this, with their heads knocking against the hard surface of the bus, for miles. 854 513

This carrying of the child continues regardless of season. In the winter, coats are put over or around the child's body. One of the obvious and most important facts about Okinawan child rearing is this custom of carrying the child on the back. But it is difficult to say precisely what this importance is. Certainly in this way the child has continuous contact from earliest infancy with the life around him. He is not accustomed to being alone, except for an occasional hour during the day when he may sleep on a blanket. At night he sleeps with his mother. A child does not have to be introduced to the world. He is not shielded in a crib. From early infancy he has seen and been almost every place in the village and learns to know many whom he will know throughout life. 854

This "public" and community life from earliest infancy is one of the outstanding features of Okinawan culture, a characteristic which it shares with-and which is derived from-Japan. One of the surprises is that despite these contacts with all phases of village experience, the child, as it grows older, becomes quite shy. This is true of boys and girls, and continues in my observation from the age of puberty up to marriage. No person who has had any contact with Okinawans fails to notice this shyness. The Okinawans use the Japanese word hasukashii to describe it, and, in this connection, the meaning is something between a feeling of shyness, self-consciousness, and shame. The shyness often does not disappear until marriage or even until the birth of the first child, when father and mother take their place as mature and responsible adults. 571 177 157

Two recent observers who analyzed the reactions of Okinawans under the stress of war have thought that early and continuous breast feeding is largely responsible for giving the child, from earliest infancy, a sense of security. While this thesis was advanced out of intimate experience (mostly in the wartime hospital at Ginoza village), it must, in my opinion, be qualified considerably. The period during which the child is breast fed is but one period in the formative years of childhood. Besides breast feeding is no monopoly of the Okinawans. Neither is carrying on the back confined to them. The period immediately after the child is taken off the back and begins to walk is a difficult one for most children. This 155 114

8 See Moloney, James C. Psychiatric observations in Okinawa Shima. The psychology of the Okinawans. Psychiatry 8 (1945), 391-99. Moloney, James C. and Biddle, Charles E. A psychiatric hospital in military government, ibid, 400-01.

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114 is an impression, and I doubt that Okinawan mothers would agree with me. The toddler stage, in my opinion, is a difficult one for the Okinawan child. It is an abrupt change from the continuous care and physical contact of infancy. This transition need not necessarily be abrupt. A child may be carried some and walk some. As he learns to walk, his mother is near him.

857 When the child is no longer carried, he ceases to be an observer and becomes a participant in play. Formerly he watched the activities of the older children and smiled to the attention when it was given. Now he wishes to catch up with them as they walk down the lanes; he is often left behind and is not fast enough nor expert enough to keep up. This is a problem of childhood everywhere, but I believe here that the transition from one type of activity to another is more drastic. The child also receives less attention from his parents, especially from his mother. This most mothers would deny. But I have often seen parents walking along a village lane, a toddler behind them crying and trying hard to keep up with them. They showed less solicitude and patience with him than they had when he was being carried. The mother gives less attention to the child during this period, particularly if she has had another child. In this, I do not mean to imply any lack of kindness or tenderness in the treatment of children, but to point out a change of emphasis. There is much more crying in the 2 to 3 year age groups than among infants who cry very little because they are entertained so much.

The toddler not only has the problem of becoming a participant in play, but of getting along without the close attention of the mother, his elder sisters, and possibly brothers.

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[842] Children are rather regularly spaced. The middle child of the lower three is most likely to be neglected. The baby is on the mother's back; he gets his breast feeding and is always with the mother. The older child has started to school or is leading an active play life. The middle child, too young for school and only tolerated by the elder child who has his own interests, is too old for the breast and the back. The successful transition from the back carrying and breast feeding stage to walking and to the stage of independent play seems most successful when there are many children of the same age in the village, and consequently absorption in play can replace the intimate attention of parents and older siblings. A father may fill in this gap, allowing his young child to accompany him to work, but this experience generally belongs to a later period of childhood.

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262 As the infant grows, nursed by the mother, he gradually receives other foods, but the variety depends on the economic status of the family. The first food (other than the mother's milk) is rice water. Later rice is made into a gruel. The rice is soaked and mashed up in a quern. Families who have rice fields, or who can buy rice, may delay feeding the sweet potato to the child until the third year. Among the poor, sweet potato feeding begins much earlier. One

there is little forcing of children,¹⁰ and this might be just as significant in accounting for the easy going security of Okinawans as that coming from breast feeding and carrying on the back. But a single element explanation is not a fruitful approach to this complex subject.

The chief factors in child development, in my observation, are the child's early and continuous contact with the mother, and the "public" life of the child¹¹ and its early exposure to the activities, the admonishments, the corrections, the admiration, and the fondling of others. Older women of the village have a major part in this, but young men and women look after a child, advise it, correct it, perhaps feed it. This "public" life is made easier because a child carried on the back, or toddling, or, later, in walking is seldom out of the view of a relative. It is common to talk with a villager in a public place and to discover that two or three of the children playing there are cousins, nieces, nephews, or more distant relatives. It is this combination of impressions and pressures, in my opinion, rather than planned training, which induces conformity and makes a child part of the village life. Certainly the standards of public and private behavior, transmitted from the parent, is reinforced at a much earlier age than in American society, by community approval, disapproval, and assistance. Part of this is due to the fact that a village, even its government, takes on some of the attributes of a large family.

Okinawan rural children grow up speaking Okinawan (Okinawago). There is no standard Okinawan and local dialectical differences are very marked. The chief distinctions seem to be in accent and

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10 There is an interesting passage in Captain Hall's voyage. Hall's party observed a boy tumbling. He stopped when he saw he was observed and could not be induced to continue. Hall's company asked an Okinawan friend to get the boy to continue. This he did without success, and feigned anger when the boy would not go on. Thereupon the persuasion stopped, the Okinawan observing, "It was for his own amusement that he began, and probably for his own amusement he will do so again." The boy resumed his tumbling when he was ignored. Hall wrote that the Okinawan showed good sense in not compelling the boy to continue "that as a task, which he had begun as an amusement, and which he had discernment enough to know would be unpleasant for us to witness in any other way. By this treatment of their children, mutual cordiality and freedom of intercourse are encouraged. It was probably owing to this mode of education that the children became at once familiar with us." Account of a voyage to west Corea and the Great Loochoo, as cited, 211.

11 This happy phrase, I believe, was first used by Miss A. H. Bacon in her still excellent book, Japanese girls and women, New York, 1907.

system and by the public life which they lead. There is a blending and shading of the private life of the home with the public life of the lanes, the shops, and the homes of others. The process is so subtle that one can live among them and be unaware of it. But children do more than grow up. They grow and reach maturity impressed with their duties and obligations. It is this cultural environment, rather than single element explanations such as breast feeding, which in my opinion accounts for the politeness, the essential gentleness, and the sense of security of the people. These characteristics can best be understood by knowing history, by knowing how people live within a family, how families live together, what these groups of families do to their arable land, their plants, their stones, their trees, and their forested and wild land, and how the private life of an individual or a family blends in with the wider public experience of the community.

The recent war has been a powerful agent of cultural change in Okinawa. The destruction of the south, the comparative well-being of the north have equalized the roles of the two great divisions of the island, and the north is no longer a rustic hinterland. The years of military service in the Japanese army interfered with the transmission of the traditional culture from the old to the young. One of the striking aspects is the differences in types of information possessed by the old and the young. Men fifty years or over speak of things of which younger men and women have never heard. What is part of one man's culture is foreign to the other.

Before the war success in transmitting the traditional culture to the young depended to a great extent on the hierarchy of the family system and its scale of values. Women were subordinated to men and the younger deferred to the elder. Obedience of children and acknowledgment of parental leadership were said to characterize the pre-war society. In many ways, all these things still do. But there are indications of a growing dependence of the older on the advice and knowledge of the young.

The war and its aftermath produced conditions favorable to the leadership of younger people, especially younger men. It was easy for them to drive trucks. It was no chore to become acquainted with Americans and adapt themselves to their ways. They could learn, and comprehend more easily, some of the Western concepts implicit in governmental change. A twenty year old is not impressed with skill at typing. A sixty year old person looks upon this skill with a certain wonder.

The destruction of pre-war housing and its replacement by inferior makeshift housing have had an unsettling effect on village life. Sleeping habits and living arrangements were disrupted. The destruction even affected the use of rainwater coming from the drains on the tile roofs. It converted villages with their houses and an occasional garden into a camp-like atmosphere.

The post-war repatriation often brought to villagers a more personal awareness of the outside world. Those who returned, especially from the non-Oriental countries, created an atmosphere congenial to change.

Introduction 9

socialization. Weaning from the breast and back is an abrupt change in an Okinawan child's life. The transition from kindergarten to school age is also clear and dramatized. Before school age a child is "senseless," according to the mothers, and cannot be properly trained. 128
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Within these chapters an attempt has been made to cover the parent's or parent surrogate's treatment of the nine behavior systems and the child's response to socialization. Obviously some of the behavior systems are not relevant in infancy. In general, the early chapters concentrate on the handling of succorance, the mother's early contact with the child, the number of other individuals who share in the early care of the child, and their responsiveness to the demands of the infant. Among the hypotheses advanced in the *Field Guide*, several concern the consequence of indulgence in infancy. As stated: "Indulgence in infancy, a large number of nurturing agents, and mild transition from infantile indulgence into childhood will produce: (1) a trustful attitude toward others, (2) general optimism, and (3) sociability." It is also stated that training with respect to succorance will tend to influence sociability. 121

It is hoped that, on the basis of the information presented in the chapters on infancy, the reader can compare indulgence in infancy and the number of nurturing agents. The comparison of weaning from the breast and from complete dependence on caretakers should make it possible to evaluate the severity of the transition. For the consequent measures one may turn either to the description of the behavior of older children or to the behavior and belief systems of adults. Is it true that, comparatively speaking, the Juxtlahuacan Mixtecan child is more friendly and sociable in later life than the Nyansongan? In infancy, the Mixtecan is constantly held or carried close to the mother's body, enveloped in a shawl. The Nyansongo child is tended for periods of time by a less consistently responsive 5-to-8-year-old child. In adult life, are the Juxtlahuacan Mixtecan adults more optimistic and trustful than the Nyansongans? 121
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With the onset of weaning, other behavior systems become important. Training for self-reliance and the associated punishment for succorance are universal problems, but the degree to which this new behavior is expected of 3-year-olds varies from one society to another. The Orchard Town 3-year-old is feeding and dressing himself while the Khalapur Rājput child of the same age may still be dressed and fed by his mother. Similarly, as mentioned earlier, the abruptness of the shift in expected behavior varies. The handling of aggression against parents, siblings, and peers is also a universal problem which 155

853 There are no food taboos during pregnancy, and after birth mothers
262 can continue to eat what they wish except for certain "hard" foods,
[843] such as octopus, whale meat, and certain kinds of fish which are be-
lieved to stop the flow of milk. To stimulate lactation, the mother is
given papaya boiled with flour and noodles or a medicine made from
herbs.



Chapter 13

Infancy

858 The infant is considered a helpless, pitiable treasure who is incapable
● 155 of knowing, understanding, or learning until he is around 6 years old.
855 If this senseless child is treated affectionately and indulgently, he will
grow to be a healthy, happy adult.

177 With the spread of Japanese influence throughout Okinawa, accord-
[861] ing to informants, there evolved another belief, which in Taira is
complementary to the idea of the senseless child. This new belief is
vaguely conceptualized by most young parents but was verbalized con-
cretely by at least two sets of parents. "Children are the gift of gods.*
They are godly until they are 7 years old." Exoneration of misbehavior
on the part of the child under 7 (6 years according to Western count)
conjures up in the mind of the observer a picture of willful capricious
gods who are totally unpredictable. A shrug of the shoulder and a
phrase which completely defines both attitude and resignation in Japa-
nese is, "helpless, against one's will." Because children are godlike in
nature, they do not know any better; because they do not know any
better they are godlike in nature. Just why and how a child outgrows
this temperament could not be explained by the parents. These beliefs
foster the extreme indulgence, protection, and nurturance of young
babies. Their physical and emotional needs are attended to constantly,
with a great deal of affection.

* This notion may well have been influenced by Christian as much as by Japa-
nese ideas.

Taira: An Okinawan Village 481

In addition to meeting with physical and emotional needs, the child must be protected from the nurtured by the numerous supernatural forces in the form of malevolent and benevolent spirits which operate to influence the course of an individual's life. There are lucky and unlucky days, years, and tides, which are believed to determine the fate of a person. Females born in the year of the monkey are considered unlucky, for they are thought to outlive their male contemporaries. Men dislike marrying them. Supplications are made and precautionary measures taken by adults to secure the newborn's life, happiness, and health. 776
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Ancestral spirits influence the development and fate of the child. Occasionally a child who is the victim of ill health during his early years is adopted by a couple whose ancestral spirits are thought to be more favorable than his own on the dictate of the fortune teller. By mysterious calculations involving birth dates of the principals, the fortune teller uncovers some incompatibility and advises adoption. The child remains with his parents but worships the ancestral spirits of his adoptive parents. In this way parents seek to ensure the well-being of the child. 597
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Mother interview data indicate the awareness of Taira people of the variations in personality among children of one family. Adults do in a large measure adapt their actions in accord with these differences. They recognize hereditary influences, but although a mother may comment on the similarity of temperament with regard to her child and other members in the family or kin group, there are no ideas or beliefs that the souls of deceased are inherited. Usually the mother, in describing the characteristics of the child, rarely goes beyond likenesses which can be attributed to herself or her husband. She is at a loss to explain the "very different child." "My eldest son has my nasty temper whereas my second daughter is not like either of us, very strange. All the others have a little of myself and my husband in them. We often wonder how it is that she is so unlike either of us." 155
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A child born with two cowlicks predicates a "problem" to his parents. Parents often explain, "Oh, this child is very naughty, for as you can see, he has two cowlicks." Children often search each other's heads, and on discovering two instead of the single whorl, they shout in glee, "Naughty, naughty." One 4-year-old cuddled and hugged his newborn sister after searching her head. "You have two cowlicks just like me! You and I are 'naughty,'" he whispered to her. Turning to the adults in the room, he snapped his small bright eyes and grinned impishly as he reported his discovery joyfully. [826]

Twin births are disliked only because they place a burden on the 845

478 Six Cultures: Studies of Child Rearing

855 ends swinging in the air, and dropping the huge knife in a careless
fashion on the floor near her. Suddenly there was the sound of a crying
857 baby and her eldest girl appeared with the 8-month-old on her back.
[285] Unstrapping the baby, the girl plopped her onto her mother's lap. In-
stinctively the mother pushed the basket, bamboo slats, and knife away
as she unbuttoned her blouse to nurse the baby. When the baby had
had its fill, the mother called to the little caretaker to come and carry
her. The older child called out that she was going to get a drink of
water and disappeared around the house. She entered through the
back and called to the baby to come. The baby crawled over but was
attracted on the way by the big knife. Instantly the mother snatched
it away, and the baby started to move toward the sharp pieces of
bamboo. In desperation the mother picked up the baby and called
crossly to the girl to come immediately. The older child obeyed, and
the baby was strapped onto her back. "Now go and play somewhere,"
instructed the annoyed mother.

855 Another instance of similar nature took place in the frontyard of a
863 place which that day was the scene of "house playing." A grandmother
watching the activity decided to let the year-old baby on her back down
to join in the play. "Eh, go and play with your older sisters," she
smiled and said to the child as she put her gently down on the ground.
The child started to crawl over to the group but stopped and sat very
quietly staring ahead for a minute. The grandmother, who had dis-
appeared into the house, reappeared. "A-yahl" she exclaimed as she
looked down to see the baby scratching the damp earth about her.
The baby had urinated and was puddling about so that in that brief
instant she had thoroughly soiled herself as well as her clothing.
Grumbling and scolding, "Dirty, dirty!" she picked up and carried at
arm's length the baby, who was smiling and gurgling. The old woman
cleaned the baby at the water barrel and, dressing her in clean clothes,
promptly put her on her back again.

855 The only children who were allowed to crawl about were the sons
184 of two fishermen. Fishermen's wives, compared to the farmer-woods-
462 men's wives, have a great deal more leisure time. They buy their
potatoes and rice with money from the sale of fish. The men send their
catch to the market via the bus, so their wives, except when they accom-
pany a catch to the city, have only to care for the house and a pig and
are free to watch their children as they crawl about.

854 In summary, the infancy period is characterized by consistent nur-
155 turance. Mothers, grandmothers, and child baby-tenders are helpful
and demonstrative in their affection. That they value such behavior
is further evidenced by their conscious teaching of young children to

Taira: An Okinawan Village 473

copy their behavior. When several mothers and their children are gathered, a mother of a year-old child will coo, "Cute baby" as she strokes a friend's infant's head. She smiles at her child, takes his hand, and repeats the action. A spontaneous response such as this on the part of a year-old child would evoke admiration and voluble praise from the audience. A year and a half old boy became the pride of his mother when he approached all little children with a highly nurturant attitude. He had learned his lesson so well that he considered children of his own age babies because they were smaller than himself. Walking up to them, he would bend down, pat their heads patronizingly, and take their hands to guide them along.

Equally important to the Okinawan parent is a friendly child who is well liked by everyone in the village. A happy, smiling personality is ideal, and it is this wish for the child which leads grandmothers and mothers to perpetuate the custom of burying the afterbirth of a newborn to the accompaniment of laughter and appeals to the spirits to ensure this characteristic. Adults constantly try to get infants to smile by talking and making funny sounds and faces. Even young children approach infants clapping their hands together in an attempt to elicit smiles.

Treatment of children during this initial period discourages expression of self-reliant behavior. As described above, except for rare and very brief intervals during the day, a child is strapped onto someone's back from the time he wakes up in the morning to the time he is put to bed at night. The child is carried about in this fashion from the age of one month until he is almost 2 years old.

Chapter 14

Weaning

When a mother discovers that she is pregnant again, usually about two years after her last delivery, she begins to think of weaning her child. Most mothers nurse the last child until they are about three months

Taira: An Okinawan Village 479

went home and hysterically reported the incident to her family. The mother, meanwhile, laughed and told her boy, "Just like your grandmother, can't stand to hear you cry even when you are not hurt!" She then went on to say that both she and her husband ignore the boy's crying in situations where he could help himself, but the boy's grandmother immediately runs to soothe and aid him. Generally it may be said that in extended households, grandmothers tend to prolong the dependence period and discourage independence and responsibility. 866
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The relationship between grandfather and grandchild is more restrained. Although grandfathers may be seen carrying children or doing things for them, there is always a discreet distance between them, the result of early training in respect and deference to male elders. Children do not tease their grandfathers as they do their grandmothers. Older boys, in their late teens, may carry on a superficial joking relationship with their grandfathers, but they must be careful not to show disrespect. The male elders in turn show greater affection for the male child than for the female. When both grandparents are living in the house, the child, whether male or female, is more likely to direct his succorant appeals to grandmother rather than grandfather.* 603
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Mothers, themselves, are often not too consistent in their training for independence. They will feel sorry for the child when he is first weaned and allow him to stay close to them until the birth of the next sibling. On the other hand, they will encourage the little 2-year-olds to imitate older girls and boys, particularly in their baby-tending role. A mother will strap a "doll" on her daughter or son's back. The "dolls" are usually rolled blankets or jackets, for real dolls are expensive and rarely bought in the village. Older children and adults do not fail to comment to a child carrying such a burden. They praise him for being such a good caretaker; they pretend to see the "baby" sleeping and report this to him. If the strapping becomes loose, they call to him and reassemble the "baby" and the pinning. The doll is never played with or manipulated. Thus the 2-year-old gets praised for emulation of the responsible and nurturant behavior expected of older siblings. 866
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Perhaps it is this role training that explains in part the absence of aggression toward the newborn sibling, which might well be expected with such a short interval between weaning from the breast and back and the birth of the next child. The fieldworker did not observe one instance of such hostility. If there is any hostility expressed, it is against the mother in outbursts of temper and against those who ridicule or try to comfort the displaced child. The grandmother's aggressive actions against the mother may encourage the child in this behavior. 867
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* Only 4 out of 24 sample children lived in the same house with a grandfather.

Taira: An Okinawan Village 489 868
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wiggles her hips and otherwise makes movements that are not permitted in the classical Okinawan dance.

Kindergarten children are usually asleep by 8:30 in the winter and 9:00 in the summer. They sleep an average 8 hours. Ten o'clock is considered to be proper bedtime for all people. The village bell is rung to remind everyone that the day has ended. The entire family sleeps on the mattresses spread on the floor with wooden pillows. In winter the heavy quilts are taken down. Children vary in their bedtime. Those who feel tired fall asleep soon after the evening meal. Often the grandparents lie down with the small children. If children accompany parents on a visit, they lie down in their father's or mother's lap, or on the floor to sleep. Since not all adults go to sleep at 10:00, older children may stay up longer, particularly during moonlight nights. Few children take naps except during the summer, when the heat makes everyone drowsy and slows down work during midday. Once in a while a young child goes home to lie down for a nap.

The kindergarten child's day has been an active and carefree one. He is seldom alone. "Do not play alone, go and play with others. If you play alone, people might think that others dislike you," instruct parents in Taira. Anyone passing a child playing alone would remark, "How lonely he seems." Furthermore, mothers worry about a child being alone "because he is more apt to do naughty things or get into dangerous play." 857
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A 4- or 5-year-old may sometimes find himself being a caretaker, but generally he is not considered very reliable, and being a "senseless" individual, he is not held responsible by the village for anything that might happen to his charges. It is the mother who is held culpable and is censured in this case. 857
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One mother was severely criticized by her neighbors when she punished her 4-year-old boy for abandoning his 2-year-old sibling. The children had been sent out to play. When the older boy came home for supper, he faced an angry mother who berated him for thinking only of his own pleasure and leaving his little brother on the main road and to the dangers of passing trucks. She spanked the boy, tied his hands and legs briefly, and left the crying child behind when she went to the village store with his younger sibling.

In another case, a grandmother grumbled about the "laxity" and irresponsibility of the mother. A 5-year-old was carrying her month-old sibling who was sleeping on the back in a twisted position due to loose strappings. "Come here! Your mother, where is she . . . how could she leave this child with you! Almost falling . . .," the old woman mumbled as she unstrapped the peacefully sleeping baby and 857
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490 Six Cultures: Studies of Child Rearing

857 cuddled it in her arms. The 5-year-old in this case was disappointed
854 at being relieved of his charge, but no doubt would have been happy
to be absolved of any blame in the event that the baby had fallen and
hurt itself.

857 Most 4- and 5-year-olds, therefore, find their nurturant efforts frus-
866 trated, for they are considered too young to carry their younger siblings.
They are told that their necks will hurt, they are not strong enough,
[593] and that they will be dwarfs if they started to carry such a heavy bur-
[155] den from such an early age. A sturdy 5-year-old, nevertheless, finds
that if he is persistent enough, his mother will allow him to carry his
infant sibling for short periods of time with close supervision. It is on
these short jaunts that the child basks in the shower of praise and is
richly rewarded for his nurturant behavior. Several mothers reported
how their 4- and 5-year-olds take pride periodically in mopping up
floors, setting tables, and clearing up after a meal. "They don't really
do these chores, they help at it, but we let them do it because they like
to. And if they don't feel like doing it, we don't say anything," report
these mothers.

857 Frequently kindergarten children accompany their mothers to the
241 potato fields in the afternoons. There they play in and around the
plants or "help" their mothers. One 4-year-old girl pointed out with
866 pride that she goes with her mother to their fields to "clean dirt off the
potatoes" which her mother has dug before placing them in the basket.
Boys of 3 and 5 were observed "assisting" by following adults' in-
structions to drop the seed potato into the hole at planting time. Gen-
erally adults dislike taking children to distant fields, for they beg to
be carried near the half-way point. Occasionally a young child who
has been on such a trip is toted back in the grandmother's empty car-
rying basket or in one of the suspended shoulder-yoke baskets of his
grandfather.

863 During the kindergarten period, constant pressure is put on the
child to learn sphincter control. The child goes pantless until he at-
514 tains this goal, which is usually achieved by the age of 4. There is little
formal bowel training. Children simply crouch and defecate. Grand-
mothers or mothers clean up the feces as soon as they see them.
Younger children eliminate all over the village, but by 3 they usually
restrict themselves to their own yards. When there are grandmothers
[887] in the family, bowel training seems to be taken over by them. Not in-
frequently the old woman can be seen standing over a child in the
yard or cleaning up both the child and the yard. She is generally the
one who gently coaxes the child to use the outhouse when he is old
enough and physically able to straddle the opening over the pit. The

494 Six Cultures: Studies of Child Rearing

865 "Play and fight are children's work." As one mother reported, "It is no
857 use. They fight and then before you know it, they are friends again.
[861] In Japan, parents often interfere with children's fights, but we here in
Okinawa don't believe in doing so. It is much better to let them alone
unless they injure one another. The way it is, it would make an adult
look like a fool to interfere." Some parents attempt to channel aggression
by calling a wrestling match between boys who start arguing. In
this way, rock throwing and fighting with sticks are avoided, and the
boys can work off their anger, but hitting, biting, and pushing, as well
as rock throwing, were observed among children of this age. As the
children approach school age and gain facility in language, they resort
more and more to verbal aggression; however, as will be discussed
later, some physical aggression is carried over in the behavior of boys
toward girls. At no time is aggression toward younger children toler-
ated.

[124] Only after exhaustive questioning can one get parents to admit that
they train their children to retaliate. "Never fight; if someone hits
you, just walk away, for you (in thus showing your strength to resist)
will win the fight; fighting is bad," instruct mothers, according to the
mother interview. Informal talks nevertheless revealed that parents
disliked it if their children are underdogs all the time.

865 Boys are expected to be more aggressive than girls, who are, ideally,
858 docile, gentle mannered, kind, reserved, and considerate. In some ways
adults seem to train little boys to be aggressive. Beginning in infancy
they tease and bully them, holding their arms and restricting them
bodily, withdrawing desired objects and pretending to scold and hit.
They glean great amusement at the expense of the child if he screams
and strikes out in anger. The adult expresses surprise and mock anger.
Finally, when he cries, everyone will laugh while the mother retaliates
by playfully slapping the aggressor. While most of this kind of teasing
is restricted to male infants and young boys, female children are not
exempt.

865 Irritable, pushy children do not exist in Taira. Those who try to get
● 155 things by "walking over others" do not get far, for children ostracize
and avoid them. One 4-year-old, observed over a period of months,
altered his methods of acquiring goals from pushing and bullying to
socially sanctioned techniques, such as asking, waiting his turn, and
sharing. The change was startling. Adults passing on a group of chil-
dren that included this former bully no longer had to scream warnings
at him, and his mother felt she did not have to "look after him" any
more. During the time of this study, only the children of a recently
arrived fisherman and his wife were ostracized by parents as being far

Taira: An Okinawan Village 495

too aggressive and ill behaved. The children played with them but never sought them out and often deserted them en masse when disagreements arose. Taira villagers blamed the parents in this case for being too lax and quarrelsome with each other. 865 155

Peer groups are another of the major agents of socialization for the young child. Child interview data intimate that censure by peers arouses much more anxiety than censure by parents. Refusal to comply with the demands of his peers in the face of punishment from his parents for complying raises in the mind of the child, the question, "Will he hate me for not doing what he asks?" Consequently the child chooses the support that is available to him the greater part of his day and calculates the risk of adult censure quite logically. 857 861

In despair, one mother described how her 5-year-old boy rushes into the kitchen daily and demands to be given his lunch standing on the dirt floor. Despite his parents' instructions to wash his feet and sit properly on the raised portion of the room to eat, the boy scrambled on all fours and hung his unwashed feet over the edge and shoveled his rice down his throat because "his friends were waiting for him."

As mentioned above, the village as a whole acts as another socialization agent. However, although various members shout warnings in attempts to stop children from disapproved behavior, they do not punish them. Their function seems to be one of casual reminding.

When a child turns 5, he is faced with a dramatic change. Parents now begin to treat him like a school child. New independence and responsibility are expected, and an attempt is made to prepare him for first grade. 858 866



Chapter 16

First Grade

Entry into first grade constitutes a change of status for the child in Taira. It means more than just less play time and adjustment to strict routines, for now he is considered capable of knowing what he is

[872]

Taira: An Okinawan Village 503

gan playing with them excessively. Parents scolded, shooed, and threatened children to no avail. Finally the village headman took steps to enforce the rule forbidding children to play with the faucets. Passing a faucet one day, he came upon a 9-year-old turning the water on and off. "You come to the office later. You know you are not supposed to play there," he said sternly to the boy. Later the boy reported to the office. The clerk, in the absence of the headman, instructed the boy to bring 10 yen and his father to the office. The boy ran home and returned to the office with 10 yen and told the headman, who had returned meanwhile, that his father was not back from the fields, so he was unable to accompany him. The headman's wife, in relating the story to the fieldworker, described how surprised and amused her husband was to find the boy so obedient. Because he had just assumed office a week earlier, he had not expected compliance with his orders.

An obedient child is rewarded with verbal praise and admiration by adults. He is told that he is a good child and that he has "a good head." If he is capable of anticipating commands and quick to comply with hints, parents of other children urge their children to play with him.

TECHNIQUES OF SOCIALIZATION

Although the child has learned many types of preferred behavior by the time he is 6 and has been rewarded and punished for many acts, his entry into first grade is a time of increased discipline and a suitable time to discuss the techniques used by Tairans in socializing their children.

Examination of the different techniques reveals that the most important and reliable of these is the denial or withdrawal of love. There is a good share of physical punishment, threatened food deprivation, and shaming. Praise and rewards are inconsistent and haphazard. Reference to a "God" is common, but there exists no complex system of instructive myths, stories, or prayers. Training in skills is highly informal.

The technique of withdrawal of love or support is a curious double-edged one. If we take the position of the child, we would conclude that he shows a deep sense of confidence in the bond between himself and his mother when he "runs away from the house" after a severe scolding or spanking. He runs away in the belief that he will arouse the anxiety of his mother and recover a love or support, which he has temporarily lost as a result of some transgression. This belief is rein-

later told the story to Lebra in the child's presence with a good deal of rel- 861
ish, while the boy merely looked sheepish and said nothing.

Punishment may be by either parent or by a grandparent. Other relatives may scold. I once observed a four-year-old being scolded long and shrilly by her father's sister. I asked why the mother, who was just inside the house, did not do the scolding and I was told that the child would not mind her mother and so the aunt had had to step in. I was also given the impression that the child's mother would hardly have dared defend her. It seems likely that mothers and grandmothers punish most frequently but that fathers, though they punish less frequently, are more severe; they are certainly more feared. It is said that after a child is punished it is usually comforted by the adult who punished it. There are, of course, individual differences. One man at Nanahan was known to be particularly harsh with his children. Pitts observed him on one occasion chasing one of his children around the village with a strap.

Okinawan adults, especially women, frequently tease children. On two 855
occasions I saw a particularly cocky little boy of three or four teased in a deliberate attempt to make him angry or to make him cry. On the first occasion one of his aunts, his mother's oldest sister, struck the boy's baby sister, pretending to hurt her. He was very fond of the baby and the object of the teasing seemed to be to arouse his sympathy to the point where he would have showed his emotions, at which point, I assume, the crowd of women would have laughed. This time the teasing was unsuccessful. On the second occasion his mother and her sisters told him first that I was going to take him away, then that I was going to take his little sister away, and produced other variations on this theme. After several minutes of this he went grimly over to his mother and began hitting her with his fists. The women all regarded this as great sport. No effort was made to stop him from hitting his mother. This sort of teasing seems to have amusement as its main object, but probably has other functions as well. It may possibly provide women a necessary outlet for feelings of hostility, especially against males. But it may also have the more important functions of producing in the child the desirable emotional responses---sympathy for the little sister, fear of losing her, fear of being separated from home---while at the same time conditioning the child to inhibit the expression of these emotions. [154] [867] [152]

On another occasion I saw the mother of the children just mentioned hold out a lighted match in front of the baby until the baby, after regarding it in wonderment, reached out and was burned. The women watched expectantly and laughed when the baby cried, but in this case the act seemed more like deliberate instruction in the properties of fire than merely teasing. But as in teasing, the discomfort to the child is something not to be avoided but rather to be enjoyed. And as in teasing, the child learns to associate laughter with his own discomfort, or perhaps with his expression of his discomfort. He may thereby learn to avoid being laughed at because it is associated with discomfort, and to avoid the expression of discomfort because it brings laughter. [861] [155]•